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Allen-Scott Report Research Probe Hits Sore Spots

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The White House is in a big sweat over that little-noticed House Rules Committee proposal for a sweeping investigation of the government's multi-billion dollar research and development operations.

Apparently fearful of embarrassing and politically painful disclosures, the White House is making strenuous undercover efforts to block the TNT-loaded probe.

More than \$14 billion a year of taxpayers' money is now being spent for research and development; approximately two-thirds in contracts to private industry; some 10 per cent in grants and contracts to universities and other non-profit organizations; and the remainder by government agencies and scientists.

Bustily aiding the White House's scuttling maneuvers are a half-dozen powerful committee chairmen, spearheaded by Representative Carl Vinson, D-Ga., long-time head of the Armed Services Committee.

Reason for this remarkable backstage alliance is the feeling of these influential chairmen that the proposed investigation by a special "blue chip" committee would cut across their own jealously-prized jurisdictions and dig into matters they consider reserved wholly for them.

Other opposing committeemen are Representatives Harold Coolidge, D-N.C., Agriculture Committee; Thomas Morgan, D-Pa., Foreign Affairs Committee; George Miller, D-Calif., Science & Astronautics Committee; Adam Clayton Powell, D-N.Y., Education Labor Committee; William Dawson, D-Mo., Government Operations Committee.

To stave off the "blue chip" probe, Representative Vinson directed a letter to his Armed Services Committee to immediately launch a study of Defense Research and Development.

What It's All About

Representative Howard Smith, D-Va., veteran chairman of the potent Rules Committee, proposed the sweeping research investigation without advance notice to House Democratic leaders.

It was a complete—and disturbing—surprise to them and the White House.

Particularly as Smith's resolution was bipartisan, with both Republican and Democratic signers, as follows: Representatives Carl Elliott, D-Ala., Richard Bolling,

D-Mo., and Clarence Brown, R-O., one-time campaign manager of the late Senator Robert Taft.

Speaker John McCormack, Mass., sought out Bolling and told him:

"Your resolution has touched off a revolution. A half-dozen committee chairmen, whose committees have jurisdiction over agencies with huge research programs are up-in-arms. They are girding to do battle against you. What's it all about?"

"You'll have to ask Judge Smith," replied Bolling. "It's his resolution, not mine. I signed it to find out what's going on. I've already heard from Carl Vinson. He told me he's going to fight us all the way."

Smith explained to his committeemen that he decided a sweeping investigation was necessary after making a private study of his own of a few research projects and being "shocked" by what he had uncovered. In a 24-page speech he will deliver when his resolution is taken up in the House, Smith will particularly assail the Defense Department, National Aeronautics & Space Administration, U.S. Information Agency and the Disarmament Agency for "wasting millions of dollars" on useless research.

Under the Rules Committee proposal, the investigation would be made by a special five-member committee selected by Speaker McCormack.

Smith's personal choice for probe chairman is Representative Elliott, Ala., rated as a moderate and on good terms with both sides

The resolution is certain of approval by the Rules Committee. Its fate in the full House is another matter. With the White House, Vinson and other important committee chairmen against the "blue chip" probe, its prospects are highly conjectural.

House insiders give it only a 50-50 chance. However, Republicans are expected to give it solid support.

Why White House Worries
Two top White House assistants are in charge of dialing out research grants and contracts running into millions.

They are Ralph Dungan, member of the President's Staff for many years, and Dr. Jerome Wiesner, science adviser to the President. Dungan usually has the final say on who gets what and how much.

An illustration is the Institute of Defense Analysis, headed by Richard Bissell, one-time official of the Central Intelligence Agency who had a major hand in the ill-fated Bay of Pigs invasion. Since Bissell became connected with the Institute, it has received \$5 million in Defense contracts.